

Cuts Restored – All Veterans to Receive Final Salute from a Grateful Nation

11/3/2014

I am pleased to tell you that at my urgent request, the Pentagon will restore sequester-based cuts to the Military Funeral Honors program – cuts that would otherwise have denied thousands of veterans their final salute – a military honor guard to play “Taps,” deliver a rifle salute, and present the family with an American flag.

U.S. Army Secretary John McHugh confirmed the decision last week in direct response to my October 9th letter to him, and to Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, urging restoration of this program to provide a token reimbursement to the military honor guards who salute their comrades regardless of weather, distance or other difficulties they regularly encounter.

In his letter, Secretary McHugh assured me that “The Army has no intentions of failing to provide appropriate honors to our Veterans, and we will find a solution to this sequester-related problem.” He further assured me that while the Pentagon puts the details of the solution into place, “all components (of the military) will continue to provide burial honors.”

I thank Secretary Hagel and Secretary McHugh for their prompt and positive response to my letter of concern on behalf of veterans throughout our region and across the nation. Our obligation to protect and serve those who have put themselves in harm's way for us must forever extend to this final honor – Taps, a rifle salute, and an American Flag presented to the family on behalf of a grateful nation.

Have a great week.